

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/641,394

Examiner

John M Winter

Applicant(s)

MACHADO ET AL.

Art Unit

3621

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to The paper filed on January 28, 2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-6.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 8/8/2000 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

JAMES P. TRAMMELL
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600

DETAILED ACTION

Status

Claims 1-6 remain pending,

Response to Arguments

1. The Applicant's arguments filed on January 28, 2005 have been fully considered.

As per claims 1-6 the Examiner finds that limitations of claims 1-6 are not disclosed in any prior art references.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-6 are allowed over the prior art record.

1. The following is an Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:
2. The closest prior art of record Corby et al. (US Patent 6,418,417) teaches a method for valuating weather based financial instruments. Natural Gas Trends teaches an investigation of natural gas prices in relation to trading behavior.

What they fail to teach or suggest:

Performing valuations of natural gas futures and options contracts using weather based metrics, which includes a series of regression analyses to obtain a predicted baseline value for each of the monthly gas contracts within said period using said received historical weather, future weather, historical natural gas inventory, and historical gas futures contract price data;

This distinct feature renders claims 1 and 5 allowable.

Claims 2-3 and 6 are dependant upon claims 2-3 and 6 respectively and have all of the limitations of claims 2-3 and 6 respectively, and are allowable for the same reasons.

A system for valuating natural gas futures and options contracts using weather-based metrics, comprising:

a price database that stores historical natural gas futures prices information;
at least one workstation that allows a user to specify inputs that affect the value of the gas futures and options contracts; and at least one trading server, responsive to said workstation and connected to said weather history database, said weather forecast database, said inventory database, and said price database, that applies a pricing model to value gas futures and options contracts using said specified inputs from said user; whereby the system provides assistance to said user in reaching buying/hedging decisions in trading gas futures and options contracts.

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This distinct feature renders claim 4 allowable.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John M Winter whose telephone number is (703) 305-3971. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-6, 1st Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James P Trammell can be reached on (703)305-9768. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 305-7687 for regular communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

JMW
April 4, 2005



JAMES P. TRAMMELL
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